

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 4, 6-12, and 14-22 are pending in this case. Claims 4, 6-12, and 14 are amended and Claims 15-22 are added by the present amendment. Claim changes and additions are made to incorporate previously-presented claims in the pending claims. Thus, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 11-12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kakarala et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,088,394), further in view of Lin et. al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,069,973); Claims 3 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kakarala and Lin, further in view of Tsuruoka et. al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,721,003); Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kakarala and Lin, further in view of Skow (U.S. Patent No. 7,102,669) and Hirano et. al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,144,412); Claims 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kakarala and Lin, further in view of Neter (U.S. Patent No. 7,133,073); and Claims 4, 6, and 7 were indicated as including allowable subject matter.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 4, 6, and 7.

Claims 1-3, 5 are canceled. Thus, the rejection of Claims 1-3, 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is believed to be moot.

Claims 4 and 6 are rewritten in independent form, as suggest by the outstanding Office Action on page 12. Thus, Claims 4, 6, and 7 are believed to be allowable.

Claims 8-10 depend from independent Claim 4 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons as Claim 4. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Claim 11 is directed to an image processing method and includes the subject matter of original Claim 4, which was indicated as allowable. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Claim 12 is directed to a computer-readable medium and includes the subject matter of original Claim 4, which was indicated as allowable. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Claim 14 is directed to an image processing apparatus and recites the features of Claim 4 in a non-means-plus-function format. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 14 is patentable for the same reasons as Claim 4 and request that the rejection of Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

New Claims 15-17 and 19 depend from Claim 6 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons as Claim 6.

New Claim 18 depends from Claim 4 and is, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons as Claim 4.

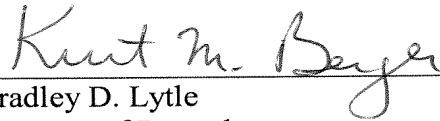
New Claims 20-22 recite the elements of original Claims 11, 12, and 14, respectively, and include the subject matter of Claim 6, which was indicated as allowable. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 20-22 are allowable for the same reasons as Claim 6.

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

An early and favorable action to that effect is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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